

MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL



2016 | ANNUAL
REPORT

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MISSION STATEMENT

Missouri State Rehabilitation Council

OUR VISION

The Missouri State Rehabilitation Council envisions a society that values all of its members equally and provides opportunities so that all people are able to meet their needs, fulfill their dreams and participate in society.

OUR MISSION

To ensure that persons with disabilities have opportunities to be as productive as possible by advising Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation that services provided to persons with disabilities are:

- of the highest quality.
- consumer directed.
- responsive to consumer choice.
- effective.
- individualized.
- culturally specific and relevant to labor market trends.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

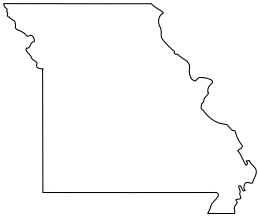
To work in partnership with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to achieve positive outcomes for persons with disabilities by:

- providing input on the state plan, policies and practices affecting services to persons with disabilities.
- identifying strategies to address the needs of people who are not being served or who are being underserved.
- obtaining and interpreting consumer input.
 - identifying corrective action consistent with that input.
- advocating for adequate resources to ensure that the rehabilitation needs of all Missourians are met.

To support Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation in complying with applicable laws such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Workforce Investment Act, the Rehabilitation Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

(Adopted Nov. 4, 1999)

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR



MISSOURI STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

3024 Dupont Circle ■ Jefferson City, Missouri 65109
Phone: 573-751-3251 ■ Fax: 573-751-1441

Aimee Wehmeier
St. Louis
Chairperson

Tim Tadlock
Gallatin
Vice Chairperson

James Ankrom
Smithville

Dennis Atkins
Viburnum

Daniel Cayou
Jefferson City

Judy Heard
St. Louis

Bob Hosutt
Eureka

Gary Otten
St. Louis

Lori Pace
Rogersville

Mary Stodden
St. Charles

Brent Yerian
Jefferson City

C. Jeanne Loyd
Jefferson City
Ex Officio Member
VR Assistant Commissioner

December 31, 2016

The Honorable Jay Nixon
Governor of Missouri
State Capitol
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Nixon:

On behalf of the members of the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council, I am proud to present the Council's annual report for fiscal year 2016. In these pages, you will find the progress made by Missouri citizens who were served by vocational rehabilitation programs.

Each Council member has unique experiences in advocating for the rights of our fellow Missourians whose physical or mental disabilities may pose barriers to productive employment. Through our quarterly meetings and committee deliberations, we have given our support to Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation to empower individuals with disabilities and to encourage decisions that lead to greater self-sufficiency.

We have advised Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation on innovative programming to reach the underserved populations in the state and on exploring additional methods of obtaining consumer satisfaction feedback.

It has been my great privilege to work with members of the Council, as well as with Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation staff, all of whom are dedicated to providing our citizens with the opportunity to make choices in obtaining meaningful employment. Employment is a key to independence.

Sincerely,

Aimee Wehmeier
Chairperson

STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

CHAIRPERSON



AIMEE WEHMEIER
St. Louis

VR ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER



C. JEANNE LOYD
Jefferson City

EX OFFICIO MEMBER

VICE CHAIRPERSON



TIM TADLOCK
Gallatin



JAMES ANKROM
Smithville



DENNIS ATKINS
Viburnum



DANIEL CAYOU
Jefferson City



JUDY HEARD
St. Louis



BOB HOSUTT
Eureka



GARY OTTEN
St. Louis



LORI PACE
Rogersville



MARY STODDEN
St. Charles



BRENT YERIAN
Jefferson City

COUNCIL'S PURPOSE

The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) was first authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended in 1998 (referred to hereafter as the Act). Section 105 of the Act requires the state vocational rehabilitation agency to establish a council.

The SRC was initially formed on June 1, 1993. Members are appointed by the governor and serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms. As required by the Act, SRC members represent the Statewide Independent Living Council; the Parent Training and Information Center; the Client Assistance Program; the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program; the Office of Special Education, which is the state agency responsible for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; the Missouri Workforce Development Board; community rehabilitation program service providers; disability advocacy groups; current or former applicants/recipients of vocational rehabilitation services; and business, industry and labor.

The SRC is responsible for reviewing, analyzing and advising VR regarding its performance on such issues as eligibility; the extent, scope and effectiveness of services; and any other functions affecting people with disabilities. Full SRC meetings are held quarterly on the first Thursday of February, May, August and November at the VR central office in Jefferson City. Subcommittees meet as needed throughout the year via conference calls.

During FY16, the SRC was actively involved with VR in the activities below.

MISSOURI	STATE	REHABILITATION	COUNCIL
Attended and participated in VR public hearings to provide input on the combined state plan	Coordinated and participated in presentations and activities with other councils and agencies including the Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the Client Assistance Program, the Statewide Independent Living Council, the Department of Mental Health, the Parent Training and Information Center, Missouri Assistive Technology, the Hearing Loss Association, the Governor's Council on Disability, the Division of Workforce Development, and the Office of Special Education	Reviewed and provided recommendations to VR regarding the combined state plan's comprehensive statewide needs assessment, goals, priorities, standards and performance indicators, performance accountability measures, and comprehensive system of personnel development	Provided comments to VR regarding issues pertaining to waiting lists (Order of Selection)
Evaluated and provided recommendations on the effectiveness of vocational rehabilitation services and consumer satisfaction feedback			Reviewed hearing decisions and mediation outcomes
Assisted VR staff in preparing the SRC's 2016 annual report for the governor and the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration on the status of vocational rehabilitation services in Missouri		Provided recommendations to VR on policy revisions and rule changes	Reviewed the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and new regulations pertaining to Title IV

MISSION, VISION & PRINCIPLES

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation

MISSION

Our mission is to provide opportunities and resources to eligible individuals with disabilities leading to successful employment.

VISION

Our vision is to provide everyone with a great VR experience.

OPERATING PRINCIPLES

We will:

- Act with a sense of urgency.
- Provide quality customer service.
- Maximize our resources.
- Do the right thing.
- Put people first.
- Continuously evaluate our practices/processes.



LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR



C. Jeanne Loyd, Ed.D. • *Assistant Commissioner*
3024 Dupont Circle • Jefferson City, MO 65109 • dese.mo.gov

December 31, 2016

The Honorable Jay Nixon
Governor of Missouri
State Capitol
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Governor Nixon:

The annual report presented to you from the Missouri State Rehabilitation Council for fiscal year 2016 provides information on the Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation employment program for individuals with disabilities.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation has operated under an Order of Selection since October 2003 due to the number of applicants requesting services, rising service costs and limited federal funding. The Rehabilitation Act requires eligible individuals with the most significant disabilities to receive services first. All other eligible individuals receive services as funds become available.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation cleared the waiting list for services during FY16 and helped 5,170 individuals reach successful employment outcomes. The program met all Federal Standards and Performance Indicators and had a success rate of 60.1 percent for the individuals who received services and exited the program.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation works closely with school districts across the state and provides transition services to eligible and potentially eligible students with disabilities. In FY16, the program assisted over 1,700 youth with disabilities in reaching their employment goals with a 59.3 percent success rate.

Missouri Vocational Rehabilitation grant dollars expended for purchased client services from community vendors are effective and help local economies. In addition, the total annual increase in earnings from referral to closure for competitively employed clients in FY16 was over \$66 million. The program's customer satisfaction survey results are consistently among the top in the nation.

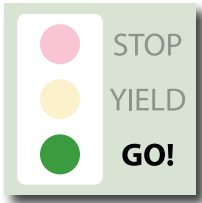
In closing, the Council and I offer our sincere appreciation for your personal interest and support in serving people with disabilities.

Sincerely,

C. Jeanne Loyd
Assistant Commissioner
Office of Adult Learning and Rehabilitation Services

VR HIGHLIGHTS

Important items to note from FY16 regarding VR's positive impact on the quality of consumers' lives and the communities it serves include:



5,170 consumers with disabilities achieved successful employment outcomes.



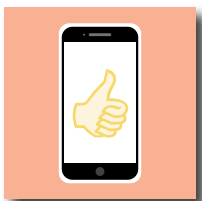
28,366 consumers worked with VR counselors.



97% of successfully employed consumers had significant disabilities.



1,444 successfully employed consumers received supported employment services.



1,768 youth with disabilities reached successful employment outcomes.



\$66,066,208 was the total annual increase in income from referral to closure for 5,123 competitively employed consumers.

AGENCY OVERVIEW

Prepared on behalf of the SRC, this annual report highlights various programs and services of VR during federal fiscal year 2016 (Oct. 1, 2015, to Sept. 30, 2016).

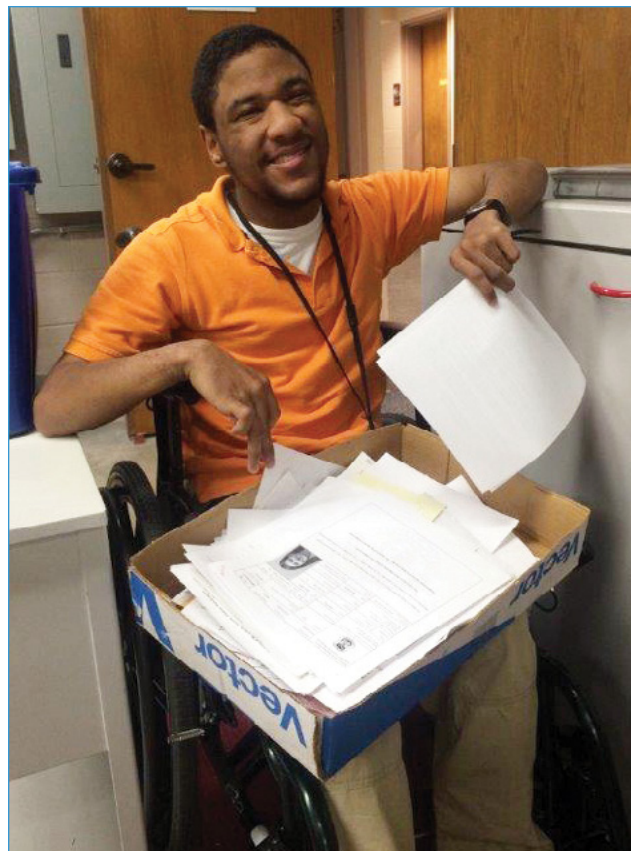
On Oct. 1, 2003, due to insufficient funds to serve all eligible consumers, VR began operating under an Order of Selection with three priority categories. Eligible consumers with the most significant disabilities are required by law to receive services first (Category 1). Eligible consumers who have less significant disabilities are required to be placed on a waiting list for services (Categories 2 and 3).

During FY16, VR counselors worked with more than 28,000 people in various categories with an average daily census greater than 14,000. VR helped 5,170 consumers reach successful employment outcomes and cleared the waiting list for services.

Figure 1 (below) illustrates the number of successful outcomes and the percentages of success during the past five years. It shows that in FY16, more than 60 percent of consumers who received services through VR were successfully employed. This statistic is a percentage of all eligible consumers leaving VR who received services.

State Funding and the Social Security Reimbursement Program

VR receives state funding from the general revenue fund, the Missouri Lottery and the Department of Mental Health. The match requirement is 21.3 percent state funding and 78.7 percent federal funding.



Meguelle Nunn worked at Special School District of St. Louis County's central office as part of a summer work experience program. VR partnered with the district and Paraquid to offer the experience to students receiving transition services.

Number and Rate of Successful Employment Outcomes

(Five-year trend)

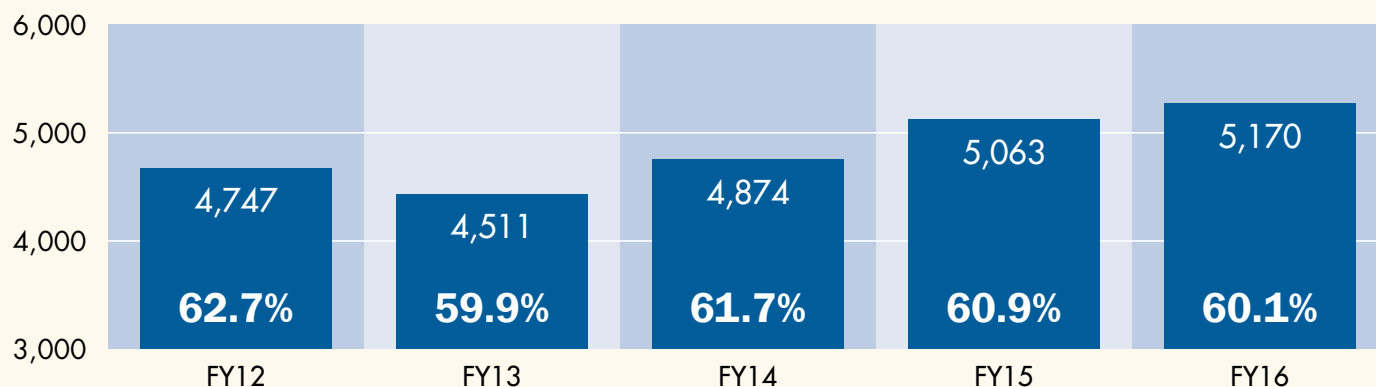


Figure 1



Kelly Cook (left), VR director of Independent Living Services, and **Rekha Nanchal** (right), district supervisor for Rehabilitation Services for the Blind, spoke to the SRC in February on the deaf/blind collaboration between the two agencies.

The Social Security Administration (SSA) reimburses state vocational rehabilitation agencies for the costs of providing services to assist SSA disability recipients in becoming gainfully employed. VR uses Ticket Tracker software to interface with VR's case-management system. The software matches and identifies consumers receiving SSA disability benefits whom VR helped in reaching their employment goals. Ticket Tracker has streamlined the consumer identification and reimbursement submission process, enabling VR to receive SSA reimbursements in a more timely and efficient manner. In FY16, VR received \$5,227,004 in reimbursement claims. A portion of this funding helps support the Centers for Independent Living.

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) was signed into federal law in 2014 to strengthen the workforce development system by aligning and improving employment, training and education programs. WIOA makes changes to programs authorized under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 especially the VR program. Some of the areas in which this legislation affects the program include employment for individuals with disabilities, employer relationships, services for youth and students with disabilities, and collaboration with other federal and state agencies and partners.



Debby Loveall-Stewart, program coordinator for MPACT (Missouri Parents Act), presented at the SRC's August meeting on MPACT's STELLAR Project.

With regard to VR, the new law focuses on providing services to individuals with disabilities, including youth and students with disabilities, to assist them in achieving competitive, integrated employment. VR continues to help individuals with disabilities obtain, maintain, regain and advance in employment. VR is committed to developing new relationships with employers and providing flexible strategies like on-the-job training, internships and customized employment. VR has worked with other agencies to create a combined state plan that describes how VR and its partners will collaboratively deliver integrated services to Missouri's job seekers, workers and employers under WIOA.

Comprehensive Statewide Needs Assessment

VR and the SRC jointly conduct an annual comprehensive statewide assessment of the rehabilitation needs of Missourians with disabilities. The conclusions and recommendations of the assessment are incorporated into VR's goals and priorities for the purpose of improving services for individuals with disabilities.

VR uses many methods to collect information for the assessment including consumer satisfaction surveys, public hearings, VR strategic teams, SRC input, VR case data and national census statistics.

Two areas that the assessment specifically focuses on are the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals from populations that have been traditionally unserved or underserved by vocational rehabilitation programs. The FY16 needs assessment identified the minority populations of Hispanics and African-Americans, along with individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI), as underserved. Figure 2 (right) reflects the closure percentages by ethnicity for FY16.

VR remains committed to improving services for underserved populations, increasing their employment outcomes and reducing the number of consumers from these populations who drop out prior to receiving services. One of VR's goals is to increase competitive, integrated employment outcomes for individuals with ASD.

VR utilizes the following strategies to address these areas of need:

- VR employs a part-time diversity consultant to assist with improving services to underserved areas, developing training programs and establishing outreach strategies for consumers from diverse cultures.
- The Cultural Diversity Team (composed of community rehabilitation program staff, the diversity consultant and VR district office staff) meets throughout the year to develop strategies for serving individuals from diverse cultures.
- VR provides employees with training opportunities on cultural competency that cover aspects of diversity.
- VR has appointed an autism services liaison to serve as a resource for its staff throughout the state. This liaison works with providers and the Department of Mental Health's Division of Developmental Disabilities on strategies for better serving individuals with ASD.
- In partnership with one of its providers, VR has developed a supported employment model for individuals with ASD in the mid-Missouri area.
- VR has developed Employment Services Plus, which is designed to assist individuals with ASD, TBI or cultural deafness/hearing loss who require additional supports to reach successful employment outcomes.

The assessment also addresses the necessities of youth and students with disabilities including their need for pre-employment or other transition services. Another of VR's goals is to increase the number of employment outcomes for youth with disabilities. For strategy information on this area of need, see page 15.

Closure Percentages by Ethnicity – FY16

STATUS	WHITE	AFRICAN-AMERICAN	OTHER
5,170 successful employment outcomes	75%	21%	4%
3,430 closed unsuccessfully after services	70%	26%	4%
4,300 closed after eligibility before services	70%	26%	4%

Figure 2

PARTNERING

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Partners

WIOA requires the alignment of core programs in order to provide coordinated and streamlined services. These core programs include VR; Rehabilitation Services for the Blind; Adult Education and Literacy programs; Adult, Dislocated Worker and Youth programs; Wagner-Peyser Employment Services; and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families programs. Teams composed of representatives from WIOA core partner programs, as well as other partner organizations, have been formed to develop strategies for serving mutual clients. These teams have identified focus areas, such as best practices and agency cross-trainings, that can be shared statewide and at the local level. All program partners strive to improve the workforce system and services to job seekers, employees and employers.

VR collaborates, coordinates and cooperates with partner programs to ensure that individuals with disabilities benefit from seamless access to career services, education and training. VR also participates in business services teams within the workforce system to better serve employers' needs. VR offers a dual-customer approach by supporting its job candidates and businesses in order to achieve successful outcomes for both.



Tonya Fambro, former VR director of Independent Living Services, spoke to the SRC in November on the summer work experience program that Centers for Independent Living offered to potentially VR-eligible students.

Centers for Independent Living

Centers for Independent Living (CILs) are community-based nonresidential programs designed to promote independent living for people with disabilities. In Missouri, there are 22 CILs that offer independent living services. The CILs are funded through federal and state independent living grants and are managed by local boards composed of individuals with disabilities who have been successful in establishing their own independent lifestyles.

VR and the CILs work together on a regular basis to share referrals and provide services to mutual clientele. A number of CILs have VR district office staff as active board members. VR and the CILs have developed a summer work experience pilot program to provide pre-employment transition services. The CILs offered potentially VR-eligible students access to job exploration activities, workplace-readiness training, social support and instruction on self-advocacy (including peer mentoring). Last summer, 17 CILs were involved in the program and worked with 260 students.

Department of Mental Health

The Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Divisions of Behavioral Health (DBH) and Developmental Disabilities (DD) have been longstanding partners with VR in assisting eligible individuals seeking vocational rehabilitation services to gain employment. Partnership activities include the funding of DB101, a customized Missouri benefits-planning website. Cross-system collaboration remains ongoing through system change initiatives, grant and technical support opportunities, and local/regional trainings. VR has appointed a DMH liaison and a liaison specific to ASD to work with DMH's respective divisional liaisons. DMH has representation on WIOA teams consisting of core partner programs and other partner agencies.

A recent reorganization of DD service providers, updated regulations for home and community-based services that impact Medicaid waiver services, and WIOA implementation are central to current activities and planning for DMH-DD and VR staff. Regional agency cross-trainings are being developed to communicate these evolving changes, which support individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families.

In partnership with DBH, Individual Placement and Support (IPS), an evidence-based supported employment service for adults with serious mental illness, has been a focus. IPS requires close program and clinical relationships between local mental health and vocational rehabilitation staff to ensure success.

VR is collaborating with DMH and the Departments of Economic Development and Social Services in implementing the Employment First State Leadership Mentoring Program. This program operates on the foundation that community-based, integrated employment should be the first priority for employment-related services for youth and adults with significant disabilities. Publicly funded systems are urged to align policies, regulations and funding priorities to promote community inclusion and the employment of individuals with disabilities in integrated settings earning at or above the minimum wage.

Community Rehabilitation Programs

VR and community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) collaboratively work with an outcome-based service model that emphasizes quality employment outcomes for individuals with disabilities. CRPs are nonprofit organizations accredited by recognized professional associations that have developed commonly accepted processes for evaluating employment-related services. All independently owned and operated, CRPs provide services that may include vocational planning, job development and placement services, skills training, specialized employment services, supported employment, and transition services.

Multiple ad hoc teams composed of VR and CRP staff have worked together to develop and design new processes. VR and its CRP partners have implemented several projects to improve services. A successful pilot program was created that provided a six-week work experience for students with disabilities during the summer of 2016. Twenty-two CRPs and 541 VR-eligible students participated. Also, two VR district offices and a CRP in mid-Missouri have begun piloting a newly designed supported employment model for individuals diagnosed with ASD.

Collaboration and partnership are cornerstones of the relationship between VR and CRPs and have fostered an environment of creativity and innovation. The VR-CRP steering committee meets regularly to review progress on their organizations' joint projects and on service delivery.

Missouri Reentry Process

VR participates in the Missouri Reentry Process, which encourages collaboration among government and local agencies to improve the transition of offenders leaving prison and returning to local communities and work. State government agencies include the Departments of Corrections, Economic Development, Elementary and Secondary Education, Health and Senior Services, Mental Health, Public Safety, Revenue, Social Services, Transportation, and the Office of the State Courts Administrator. Other partnering agencies include the federal probation system along with local law enforcement, faith-based organizations, service providers and treatment programs.

In addition, VR is developing a pilot program with the Department of Corrections in southern Missouri. VR will provide career counseling and coordinate services with other agencies for six-month pre-release offenders with disabilities to assist them with finding employment and returning to their communities.



VR partnered with Preferred Family Healthcare, a community rehabilitation program, and Lake Regional Health System to provide a summer work experience program for VR-eligible students. From left to right: **Bruce Adams**, assistant director of human resources at Lake Regional Health System; **Christopher Striker** and **Brenton Patrick**, program participants; **Joetta House**, Preferred Family Healthcare job coach; and **Crystal Myers**, Preferred Family Healthcare regional manager.

VR SERVICES

Transition Services

WIOA places a significant emphasis on services to youth and students with disabilities. The law's intent is to ensure that young individuals with disabilities are better prepared and have more opportunities for competitive, integrated employment. WIOA requires that VR (in collaboration with local education agencies) provide pre-employment transition services to eligible or potentially eligible students with disabilities ages 16 to 21. Pre-employment services include job exploration counseling, work-based learning experiences, counseling on comprehensive transition or postsecondary educational programs, workplace-readiness training, and instruction in self-advocacy (including peer mentoring).

VR has helped to develop and implement innovative pilot programs to provide pre-employment transition services to students with disabilities. VR also has established partnerships with the Hook Center, a regional professional-development facility at the University of Missouri; CILs; CRPs; businesses; and local school districts. With its partners, VR is working to expand pre-employment transition services to all parts of the state.

VR provides youth with disabilities ages 14 to 24 a variety of other transition services such as job placement, supported employment, training and rehabilitation technology. A team of professionals from VR, local school districts and other agencies has been assembled to offer support and technical assistance on these services.



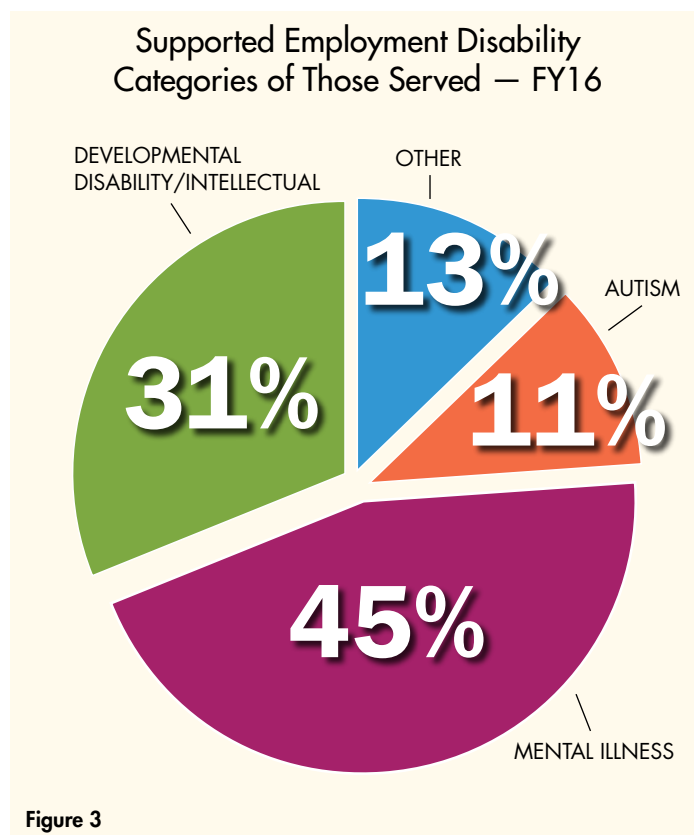
VR partnered with Fredericktown High School, MERS Goodwill and Madison Medical Center to provide a summer work experience program for VR-eligible students. Left to right: **Elizabeth Smith**, VR counselor; **Thomas Poindexter**, **Amy Metcalf** and **Joseph Yoder**, participants; and **Mellanie Smallen**, MERS Goodwill job coach.

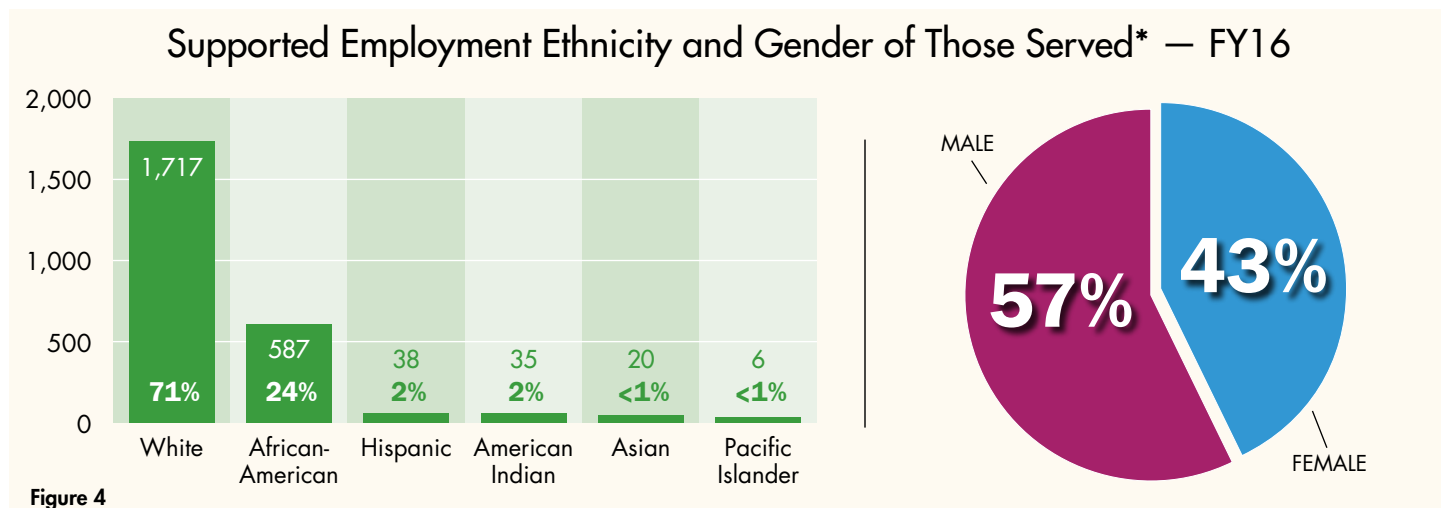
Supported Employment

VR provides supported employment (SE) services to a diverse population of consumers as indicated by Figures 3-4 (pages 15-16). Some of these services are jointly provided by DBH-DD. SE is defined as competitive work in an integrated work setting with ongoing support services for individuals with the most significant disabilities. During FY16, 60 percent of consumers who received SE services and exited the program were successfully employed.

In FY16, VR worked with 105 CRPs that provide SE services and cover all counties in Missouri. An outcome-based model of SE services is used that features a period of discovery and exploration with the consumer to develop vocational direction and community-based job exploration. Outcomes include job placement, 30 days of independent employment and 90 days of employment. In addition to these milestones, on-the-job and off-site supports may also be authorized for consumers.

VR places an emphasis on the development of natural support systems to help consumers participating in supported employment successfully remain in the workforce. These natural supports help to reduce the cost of providing SE services. Figure 5 (page 16) shows the hourly wages, average cost of services and other statistics for supported employment.





Other Supported Employment Statistics — FY16

Average cost of supported employment per consumer - - - - -	\$3,488*
Average hourly wage per consumer - - - - -	\$8.87
Average hours per week worked per consumer - - - - -	25
Success rate - - - - -	60%*
Successful outcomes - - - - -	1,444
Unsuccessful outcomes after services rendered - - - - -	959

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 25 years	943	39%
25 through 34	569	24%
35 through 44	358	15%
45 through 54	339	14%
55 through 64	175	7%
65 and over	19	1%
TOTAL	2,403	100%

*Statistics are based on the number of consumers who exited the program either successfully or unsuccessfully after receiving SE services.

Figure 5

Rehabilitation Technology

In FY16, VR provided a variety of rehabilitation technology services, assistive devices and equipment to 1,191 individuals who received services and exited the program for a total cost of \$6,591,204. VR purchases assistive devices to help consumers with increasing, maintaining or improving functional capabilities. Devices could include prosthetic or orthotic equipment, hearing aids, wheelchairs, and other powered mobility equipment. Rehabilitation technology services include consultation, evaluation, design, customization, adaptation, maintenance, repair, therapy and technical training.

VR and Missouri Assistive Technology (MoAT) have collaborated to develop a cooperative agreement to ensure the maximum statewide utilization of services. The agreement provides a plan for service coordination; for using resources to the best advantage; for information sharing, technical support and training; to facilitate the referral of potentially eligible individuals between agencies; and to help eligible people obtain rehabilitation technology services. A VR staff member is a representative on the MoAT Advisory Council.

Several VR counselors have specialized caseloads in the area of rehabilitation technology and have partnered with MoAT and Preferred Family Healthcare, a CRP, for the Better Futures Project. This pilot project focused on increasing employment outcomes for people with disabilities through the use of tablet technology.

Seven VR counselors skilled in manual communication for the deaf and hard of hearing are located throughout Missouri. Also, designated hard of hearing specialists in the Kansas City area are acquiring additional education on hearing aids and rehabilitation technology for individuals with hearing loss.

VR utilizes several assistive technology demonstration sites located at CILs for exploring, reviewing and demonstrating various devices, services and resources that are available to individuals with alternative communication needs.

In April, MoAT partnered with the Statewide Independent Living Council to sponsor the Power Up to the Summit 2016 Conference and Expo. The conference was open to service providers, consumers, independent living specialists, VR staff and other professionals in the rehabilitation field. Twenty-three VR staff members attended the event. The conference was successful in providing an opportunity to view state-of-the-art technology and equipment designed to enhance and promote the independence and quality of life of people with disabilities.



Aimee Wehmeier (left), SRC chairperson, and **Tim Tadlock** (right), SRC vice chairperson, listened to a presentation at the August meeting.

SUCCESS STORIES

Jocelyn Brisson



She did not grow up in a stable environment. In fact, from an early

age, she lived a life surrounded by substance addiction and criminal activity. It was all she ever knew. Unable to break the cycle, Jocelyn Brisson remained caught up in a world of illicit drugs and criminal behavior. For 38 years, she was a meth addict with no solid plans for her future. She had both a substance abuse problem and a criminal record. Then, things turned around in 2009 when she began working with the VR program. She completed an assessment and discovered that she would be a good candidate for college. At age 50, she got clean.

Jocelyn started college at Missouri Southern State University. After a lot of hard work, she graduated in May 2013 with a bachelor's degree in sociology. She credits her VR counselor, Marada McClintock, for her success in school. Marada gave Jocelyn the encouragement and the confidence needed to complete her degree. But Jocelyn didn't stop there. She went on to obtain her master's degree in criminal justice in December 2015. VR assisted in paying both her undergraduate and graduate school tuition.

While in school, Jocelyn spent a year volunteering part time at Starting Point Outpatient Services, which provides drug, alcohol and other addiction counseling and treatment. In May 2016, Jocelyn was offered full-time employment there as a certified alcohol and drug counselor. Her ultimate goal is to obtain additional certification as a criminal justice professional in substance abuse counseling. She has never held a "real job" until now. Jocelyn is well on her way to becoming self-sufficient and is breaking the stereotype of "once a felon, always a felon."

Jocelyn has been clean for almost a decade and is able to relate her life experiences to the individuals whom she counsels. She has been where they are and understands the challenges they face. She wants to give them the same hope that her VR counselor gave her. She said the most rewarding part of her job is "when I can see the light bulb go off in my clients' eyes, and they develop a desire to stay clean."

Jocelyn believes VR is a great resource, and she refers many of her own clients since VR "helped me to become somebody."

"We don't have to live with the stigma of mental illness or suffer from disease or addiction," she said. "I want others to know that there is hope. They don't have to live life in the shadows." ■

Tyler Bare

Tyler Bare loves his job. He works

as an accountant at the Missouri Department of Revenue in Springfield. He liked his accounting courses in high school and thought he might be capable of turning that interest into a career.

Tyler suffered a spinal cord injury in May 2009. That fall of his senior year, he received transition services from the Springfield North VR office. His VR counselor provided vocational planning and career guidance to help him transition from high school to college.

"(VR) helped me in figuring out the best direction to go; the best route to get through college," he said. "(My counselor) helped me plan my college classes out."

After high school graduation, Tyler chose to attend Ozarks Technical Community College (OTC) to work on a transfer-degree plan in accounting for Missouri State University (MSU). He had an A+ Scholarship for OTC's tuition, and VR covered his books and various fees. Upon completing his OTC coursework, he applied to and was accepted by MSU's College of Business.

VR continued to help Tyler through MSU by covering tuition, fees and books while still providing vocational services. Through college, he worked part time at Best Buy. With all of the pressure of classes and work, Tyler was thankful that he had VR's assistance to help relieve the financial stress.

Tyler had a paid internship with the O'Reilly Auto Parts corporate office in Springfield during his final college semester. He assisted with accounting in the finance department for 25 hours a week. After graduating in December 2015 with a bachelor's degree in accounting, Tyler stayed with O'Reilly until February 2016. At that point, he accepted his current position with the Department of Revenue, receiving full benefits.

Amy Hastings, the VR counselor who was in contact with him throughout his college years, said, "Tyler was a joy to work with, and it's no surprise to witness the vocational success he has achieved. We are very proud of his accomplishments and know he will go on to do more great things in his career."

Because VR improved his quality of life while in school, Tyler said the program made a huge difference in reducing the amount of stress he felt, which allowed him to focus on his studies. VR was a different route to take around an obstacle in his life, and he believes people should always seek the different routes.

"Don't stop trying," he said. ■

SUCCESS STORIES



Lamont Wilkes

Commuting to work in the St. Louis area might be commonplace,

but Lamont Wilkes' bus commute from northern St. Louis County to Fresh Ideas on the Maryville University campus shows an uncommon dedication. Depending on traffic, Lamont might spend up to 2.5 hours just traveling to campus. He doesn't mind switching among several buses and taking the extra time, though, because he's glad he has his job.

"They say I'm a good worker," he said.

For Lamont, who has autism, the journey to satisfying employment has been years in the making. His case with VR was opened in 2009, but finding the right fit was difficult at first. Ashley Lane, a VR counselor who took over Lamont's case in 2014, said one thing she wants people to know about Lamont is his persistence and his hardworking nature. Shortly after meeting Lamont, she referred him to the autism program at MERS Goodwill's Lippman Center. The program helped Lamont learn basic résumé and interviewing skills, but Lane said the center's social-skills group provided the most benefit. By learning how to communicate with his peers, Lamont also learned how to deal with his eventual co-workers and managers.

"When I first met Lamont, his social skills were a barrier to obtaining employment, and he had difficulty socializing with individuals he was not familiar with," Lane said. "Through the Goodwill program, he socialized more and made friends with people in the group, which he wouldn't have done before he had gone through the program."

Lamont also gained a volunteer position through the program at a Goodwill retail store where he was able to build up the physical stamina needed to be on his feet for multiple hours in a day.

A bit of fortuitous timing helped lead Lamont to his current job. Maryville University's rehabilitation counseling program had contacted the St. Louis West VR office looking for referrals; the school's graduate students were trying to gain experience in job placement for clients. These students were able to place Lamont at Fresh Ideas, Maryville's on-campus food service provider, where he works as a dishwasher. While he might have been a little nervous during the application process, he acclimated to his new role right away.

"They trained me how to use the machine and how to wash all the pots and pans," he said. "I picked it up pretty quick." ■

CONSUMER SATISFACTION

Consumer satisfaction with staff and services is a VR priority, and the SRC's Program Evaluation Committee continues to work with VR on reviewing and analyzing feedback from individuals who receive VR services. This feedback is shared with management, supervisors and counselors and is used as a tool to improve services, evaluate staff performance and determine training needs.

During FY16, survey letters and postage-paid envelopes were mailed to a random sample of 9,329 consumers at various stages in the rehabilitation process (with a response rate of 15 percent). Survey feedback was positive. Results showed that 98 percent of consumers surveyed felt they were treated with respect, 96 percent felt that staff was available when needed and 94 percent felt their counselor explained their choices. The overall results are listed on page 22.

FY16 Consumer Comments

"VR helped me to be able to *live independently* and *think better of myself as a person.*"

"VR changed my life for the good. *Thank all of you at VR.*"

"I've *gained a lot of confidence.* I feel good about myself."

"I am *extremely grateful* for this program."

"Made *my career and livelihood possible* for the first time with VR."

"Being employed *makes me proud to be a contributing member of society.*"

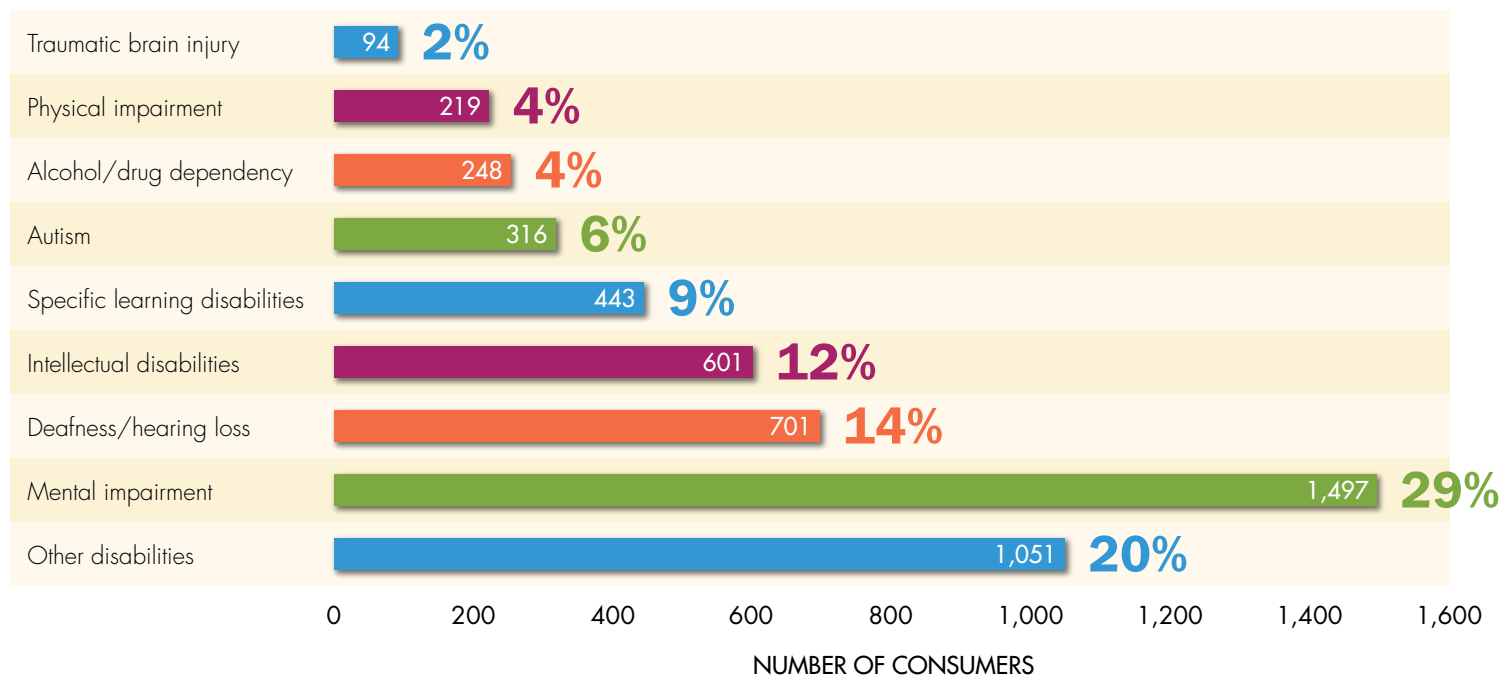
"I think VR is great. *It worked for me.*"

Survey Results (Specific group responses during FY16)	Total responses received	Staff was available		Staff treated me with respect		I knew purpose of VR services		Counselor helped plan services		Counselor explained choices	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Total responses	1,364	96%	4%	98%	2%	95%	5%	92%	8%	94%	6%
Open cases	758	98%	2%	99%	1%	96%	4%	96%	4%	96%	4%
Successful outcomes	385	99%	1%	99%	1%	97%	3%	96%	4%	96%	4%
Unsuccessful outcomes; closed before services	83	86%	14%	94%	6%	85%	15%	72%	28%	77%	23%
Unsuccessful outcomes; closed after services	138	87%	13%	92%	8%	90%	10%	75%	25%	85%	15%
Supported employment consumers	292	97%	3%	99%	1%	97%	3%	92%	8%	95%	5%
Consumers with autism	90	98%	2%	100%	0%	97%	3%	93%	7%	94%	6%
Consumers with deafness/hearing loss	199	99%	1%	99%	1%	95%	5%	96%	4%	97%	3%
Consumers with intellectual disabilities	13	92%	8%	100%	0%	100%	0%	83%	17%	92%	8%
Consumers with mental impairments	396	95%	5%	97%	3%	95%	5%	90%	10%	94%	6%
Consumers with physical impairments	290	98%	2%	98%	2%	95%	5%	95%	5%	93%	7%
Consumers with traumatic brain injury	54	96%	4%	98%	2%	94%	6%	92%	8%	92%	8%
Consumers with other disabilities	277	97%	3%	98%	2%	96%	4%	94%	6%	97%	3%

PROGRAM DATA

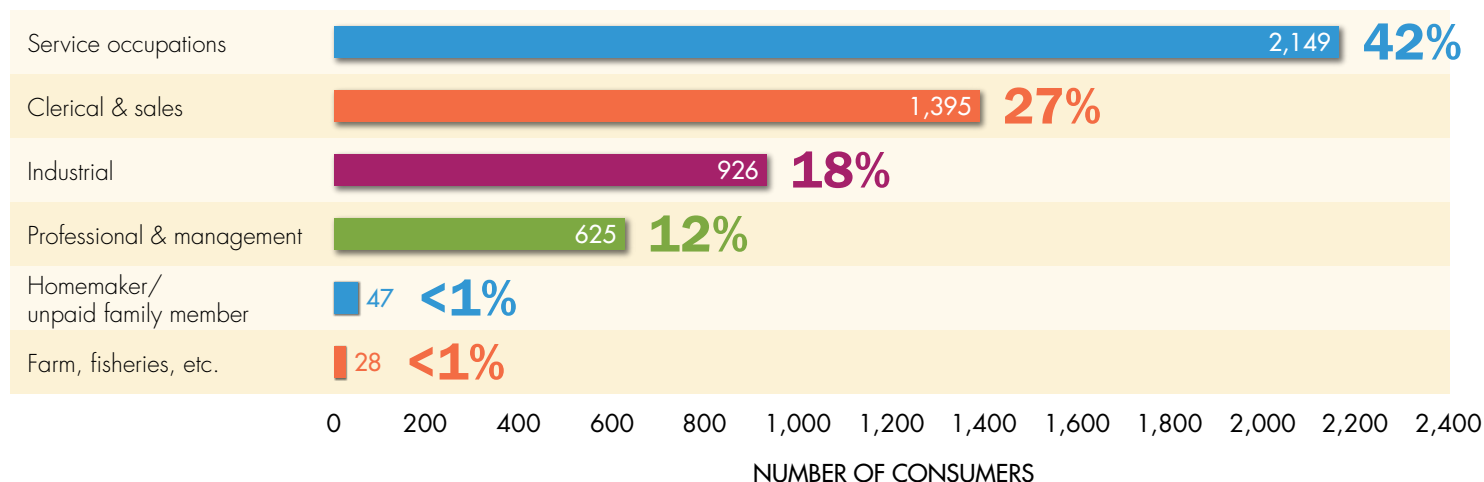
Disability Categories — 5,170 consumers with successful employment outcomes (FY16)

TYPE OF DISABILITY

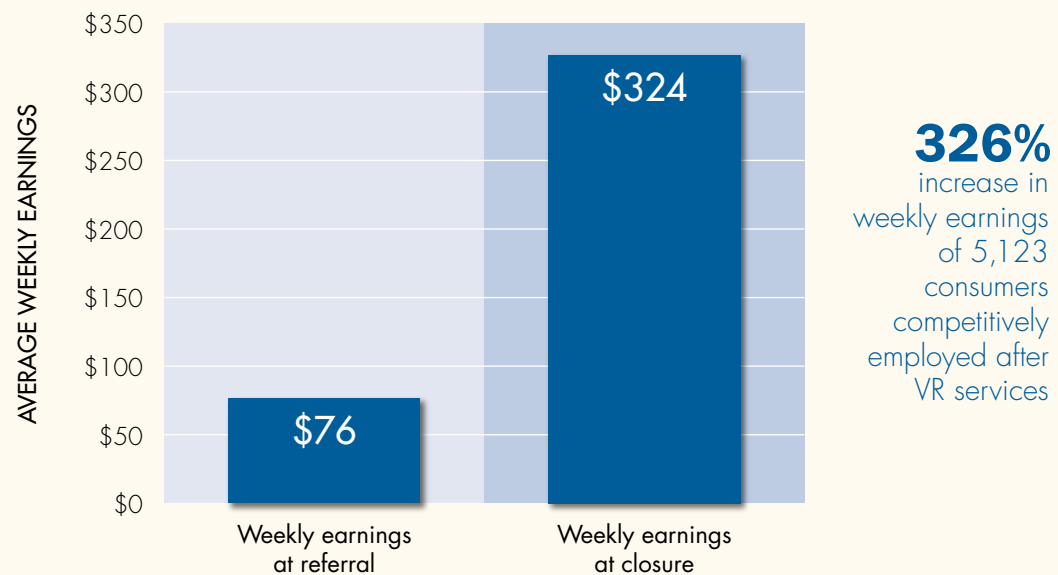


Occupations — 5,170 consumers with successful employment outcomes (FY16)

OCCUPATION



Impact of VR Services — Weekly earnings of consumers with successful employment outcomes (FY16)



With an increase in average weekly earnings of **\$248** for **5,123** competitively employed consumers, the total annual increase in income from referral to closure amounted to **\$66,066,208**.

Characteristics — Consumers with successful employment outcomes (FY16)

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	2,922	57%
Female	2,248	43%
TOTAL	5,170	100%

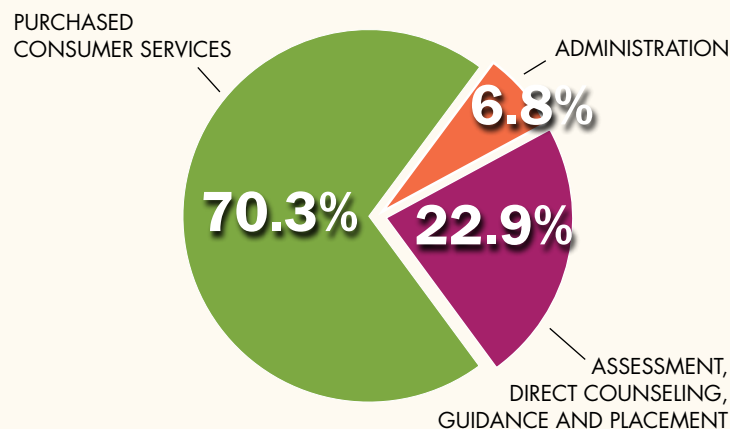
Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White	3,904	75%
African-American	1,071	21%
American Indian	80	2%
Hispanic	73	1%
Asian	35	<1%
Pacific Islander	7	<1%
TOTAL	5,170	100%

Age	Number	Percentage
Less than 25 years	1,549	30%
25 through 34	1,024	20%
35 through 44	808	16%
45 through 54	917	18%
55 through 64	641	12%
65 and over	231	4%
TOTAL	5,170	100%

Standards and Performance Indicators Report — FY16

Indicators	Federal Standards	Missouri VR Results
1.1 Change in Employment Outcomes	≥ Previous year	+107
1.2 Percentage of Employment Outcomes	55.8%	60.1%
1.3 Competitive Employment Outcomes	72.6%	98.6%
1.4 Competitive Employment Outcomes with a Significant Disability	62.4%	96.5%
1.5 Ratio of Exit Wage to State Average Pay	.52	.52
1.6 Difference in the Exiter vs. Application Income as a Single Source of Support	53%	65%
2.1 Service Rate of Minority to Non-Minority Individuals with Disabilities	.80	.93

Expenditures — FY16



VR OFFICES

1) CAPE GIRARDEAU VR

3102 Blattner Drive, Suite 103
P.O. Box 1087
Cape Girardeau, MO 63703-1087
Toll-free: 877-702-9883

2) CENTRAL OFFICE VR

3024 Dupont Circle
Jefferson City, MO 65109-6188
Toll-free: 877-222-8963

3) CHILLICOTHE VR

603 W. Mohawk Road
Chillicothe, MO 64601-3919
Toll-free: 866-572-4049

4) COLUMBIA VR

900 W. Nifong Blvd., Suite 210
Columbia, MO 65203-4467
Toll-free: 877-222-8961

5) FARMINGTON VR

901 Progress Drive, Suite 100
Farmington, MO 63640-9108
Toll-free: 800-640-7110

6) HANNIBAL VR

112 Jaycee Drive
Hannibal, MO 63401-3673
Toll-free: 877-222-8960

7) JEFFERSON CITY VR

1500 Southridge Drive,
Suite 200
Jefferson City, MO 65109-5710
Toll-free: 866-661-9106

8) JOPLIN VR

801 E. 15th St., Suite B
Joplin, MO 64804-0804
Toll-free: 877-222-8964

9) KANSAS CITY DOWNTOWN VR

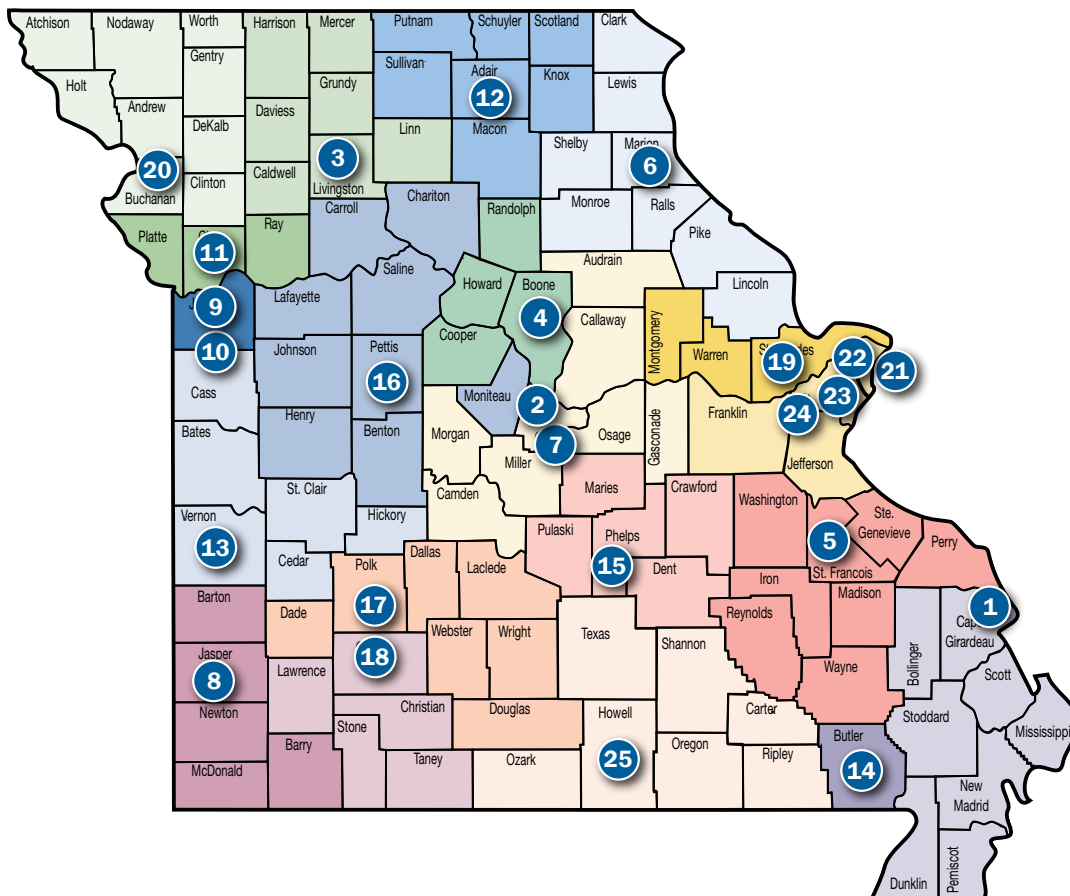
615 E. 13th St., Suite G-3
Kansas City, MO 64106-2856
Toll-free: 866-971-8568

10) KANSAS CITY EAST/ TRANSITION VR

243 N.W. Executive Way
Lee's Summit, MO 64063-1842
Toll-free: 866-831-1363

11) KANSAS CITY NORTH VR

8030 N. Oak Trafficway
Kansas City, MO 64118-1209
Toll-free: 877-270-0198



12) KIRKSVILLE VR

1612 N. Osteopathy, Suite B
Kirksville, MO 63501-2759
Toll-free: 877-222-8962

13) NEVADA VR

621 E. Highland, Suite 2
Nevada, MO 64772-1088
Toll-free: 800-598-3471

14) POPLAR BLUFF VR

1903 Northwood Drive, Suite 3
Poplar Bluff, MO 63901-2400
Toll-free: 800-281-9894

15) ROLLA VR

1101 Kingshighway
Rolla, MO 65401-2922
Toll-free: 800-890-2867

16) SEDALIA VR

2115 W. Broadway
Sedalia, MO 65301-2506
Toll-free: 800-924-0419

17) SPRINGFIELD NORTH VR

613 E. Kearney
Springfield, MO 65803-3425
Toll-free: 877-222-8965

18) SPRINGFIELD SOUTH VR

1735 W. Catalpa, Suite C
Springfield, MO 65807-1243
Toll-free: 877-222-8967

19) ST. CHARLES VR

3737 Harry S. Truman Blvd.,
Suite 400
St. Charles, MO 63301-4052
Toll-free: 855-283-2681

20) ST. JOSEPH VR

State Office Building
525 Jules, Room 201
St. Joseph, MO 64501-1900
Toll-free: 877-702-9876

21) ST. LOUIS DOWNTOWN VR

220 S. Jefferson Ave., Suite 110
St. Louis, MO 63103-2536
Toll-free: 866-971-8569

22) ST. LOUIS NORTH VR

4040 Seven Hills Drive,
Suite 257
Florissant, MO 63033-6767
Phone: 314-475-7999

23) ST. LOUIS SOUTH VR

3256 Laclede Station Road,
Suite 103
St. Louis, MO 63143-3709
Toll-free: 877-222-8968

24) ST. LOUIS WEST/ TRANSITION VR

9900 Page Ave., Suite 104
St. Louis, MO 63132-1438
Phone: 314-587-4877

25) WEST PLAINS VR

3417 Division Drive, Suite 2
West Plains, MO 65775-5900
Toll-free: 877-222-8959



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